

OPERATION DESERT SHOWER

Disaster relief takes on new dimensions for Baptist Men in the aftermath of the Persian Gulf War.

By Jim Burton

The drama of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm unfolded moment by moment via the electronic tube in America's living rooms. We saw the air raids over Baghdad; witnessed the interception of incoming Scuds by Patriot missiles. Americans suddenly became military literate with lingo of sorties, precision bombing, defense operatives and the such.

As we celebrated the allied victory a predominantly Moslem people group was just beginning their own assault against Saddam Hussein. They are the Kurds. Few of us knew anything about them. Their "nation" is Kurdistan, but you won't find it on any map. Their land stretches across Iran, Iraq, Syria and the southwest Soviet Union. Population estimates vary from 15 to 30 million people. By any count, the Kurds are the world's largest people group without a homeland.

The Iraqi Kurds staged a revolt following Saddam's devastating defeat. For nearly 2 million Kurds it became a flight for life into Iran and Turkey when the revolution failed.

The sudden influx of political refugees overwhelmed Turkey and Iran.



Larry Blanchard, an electrician from Lindale, Texas, sleeps in his jump seat on the C-130 during the seven hour flight from London to Cyprus.

Both issued pleas for help from the international community. Southern Baptists heard those pleas.

Southern Baptists established a volunteer medical operation within weeks in southeast Turkey, a NATO country with diplomatic ties to the

United States. The medical volunteers later moved into Iraq (see sidebar on page 9). Iran was a different story.

The United States cut off diplomatic ties with Iran following the hostage ordeal during the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Few Americans have traveled in Iran since then. There had not been a group of evangelicals visiting the country since the Islamic Revolution.

At the Iranian Embassy in London, representatives of Global Partners, a United Kingdom non-profit relief organization, offered to help. Contacts in the United States relayed the request to Texas Baptist Men, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board and the Brotherhood Commission. The embassy agreed to allow Americans into Iran for humanitarian aid. It was the beginning of Operation Desert Shower, short for showers of blessings.

Operation Desert Shower represented the most unusual response since Baptist Men began disaster relief in 1967. Bob Dixon, executive director of Texas Baptist Men, had just sent 10,000 new blankets to Kurdish refugees in Turkey. Representatives of Global Partners and the Iranian Christian Fellowship in London offered Iran the expertise of

Dennis Quinn steadies a corner post for a temporary covering over the cooking area in Dolenav, Iran, refugee camp. Quinn is an electrician from St. Peters, Mo.

Baptist Men in mass feeding.

The plan was to send four three-men teams. Each would have a water purification system. In addition, each team would have 10 propane burners and the appropriate allotment of pots, pans and accessories to prepare large quantities of rice.

The Foreign Mission Board leased a C-130 transport plane from the Lester E. Sumrall Evangelistic Association of

The engine closest to us has just gone out. We are flying on only three engines.

South Bend, Ind. Painted white and named "Mercy Ship Zoe," the C-130 was the primary mode of transportation for people, kitchens and supplies in Europe and the Middle East.

The following is a diary of events from key days in the historic journey of

the Southern Baptist disaster relief workers into Iran.

**Monday, May 6
Today's Word: Arrival**

LONDON—Touchdown at Gatwick could not come soon enough. A torrential rainstorm Saturday in Dallas held up two three-man disaster relief crews bound for Bakhtaran, Iran. The delay caused a missed connection in Cincinnati to London. The only option was to wait for the next evening's flight.

The first team plans to establish two feeding operations in refugee camps near Bakhtaran. Because of logistics and the payload limit of the C-130, six more men are to leave via Atlanta in five days for Oroumieh, Iran. They are to establish two feeding operations near there.

The arrival is smooth. We clear customs without hassles before taking trains and taxis to a hotel in central London.

**Tuesday, May 7
Today's Word: Visas**

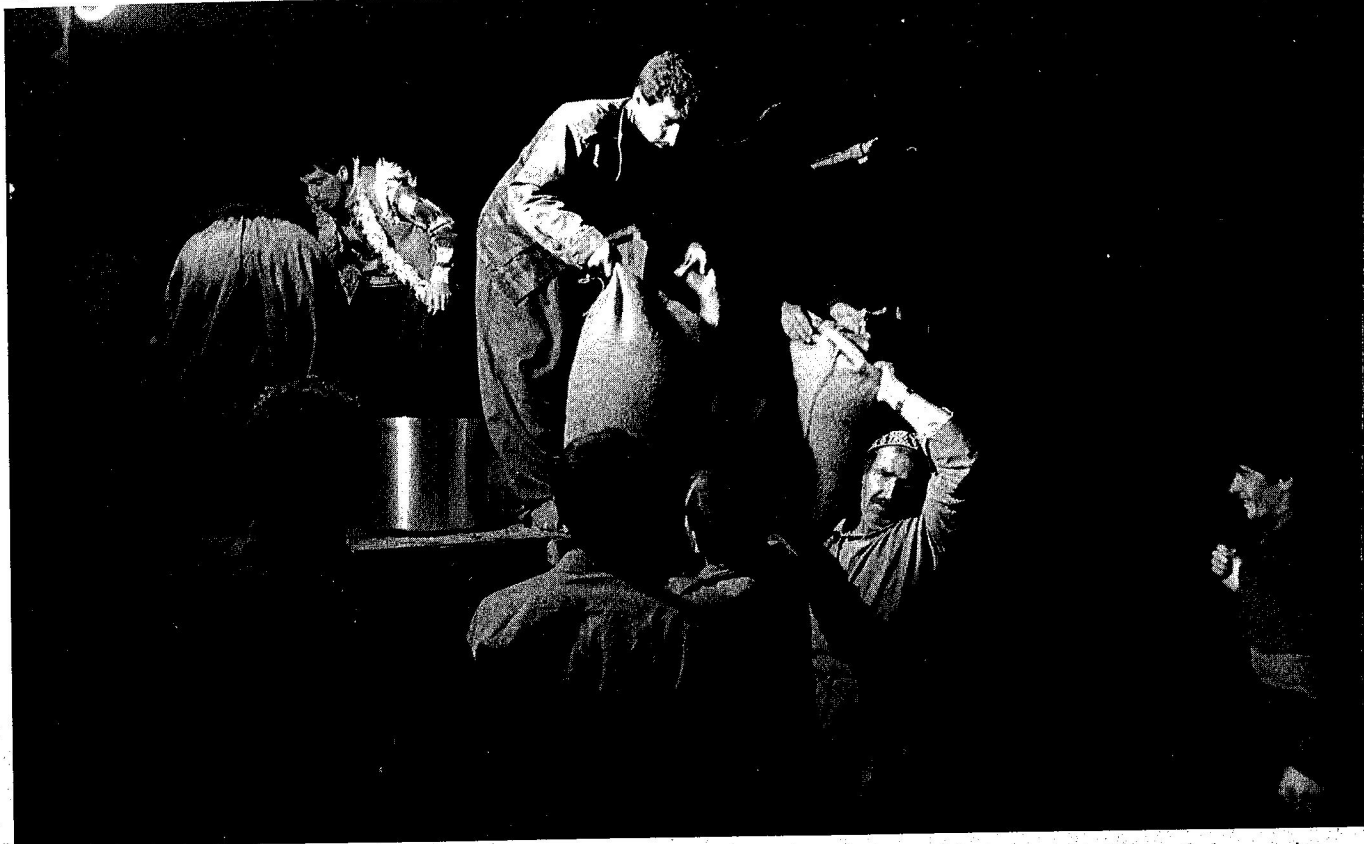
LONDON—Several late night calls on May 6 foretold that this would be a down day. The C-130 had mechanical problems returning from Turkey after delivering medical supplies. Repairs will be made in Cambridge, England, before meeting us at Stansted Airport for the flight to Cyprus.

The morning brings a few more surprises. Sam Yeghnazar, pastor of the Iranian Christian Fellowship in London, meets with us. He has been instrumental in negotiating the project. Yeghnazar leads our small caravan to the Iranian Embassy to get visas.

Under large framed photographs of Ayatollahs Kohomeini and Rafsandjani, we complete forms before going to the Iranian Consulate in another part of London to apply for visas.

Yeghnazar and on-site coordinator John LaNoue, Texas Baptist Young

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Iraqi Kurds unload the first shipment of rice. A proud people, the Kurds insist on doing most of the heavy work. That includes carrying rice bags that weigh up to 220 pounds.

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Men's director, take our visa applications and passports to the consulate. When they emerge several hours later they don't have the visas. The consulate officials say it will take 14 days; then 11 days. Finally, the Iranians promise to issue the visas by 11 a.m. tomorrow.

This afternoon we go to Yeghnazar's home for a briefing: plans have changed. We are no longer scheduled to fly into Bakhtaran. Instead, our destination is Sanandaj, the capital of Iran's Kurdistan. From there we plan to drive to a refugee camp near Marivan.

Thursday, May 9 **Today's Word: C-130**

SOMEWHERE OVER EUROPE—Our team of six disaster relief workers and two journalists board the leased Mercy Ship Zoe by 10 a.m. after clearing customs at Stansted Airport. Now that the journey has begun, we sit.

Ten jump seats line the left side of the airplane. Stashed in front of us stretching to the back of the plane are bags, boxes and gear.

Today's destination is Cyprus, Operation Desert Shower's staging point. The C-130 will return over the weekend to bring the other team and their kitchens

and water systems.

Midway through the trip we hear some popping noises and smell fumes. There is no panic as we discover that the engine closest to us has just gone out. We are flying on only three engines.

Following the delays in Dallas we meet our next major obstacle. The failed engine could cost us days.

Monday, May 13 **Today's Word: Finally**

LARNACA, Cyprus—The Mercy Ship Zoe received mercy over the weekend in Lisbon, Portugal. The crew flew in Saturday when most airports are closed. In addition, Pope John Paul was in town. Most airplane mechanics would have better things to do on a Saturday night than fix a broken cargo plane.

Air traffic controllers diverted the plane to a military airport. When they landed, a Portuguese officer told the pilot that he had orders to fix the plane.

The C-130 flew to London on Sunday to meet our second crew before returning to Cyprus. Leaders scale down the plans again. All crews will go into Sanandaj on two different flights. Only two sites will be established with six men at each.



A mother and her daughter await medical attention in a tent clinic. Doctors from Iran, Iraq, France, Pakistan, Norway and the United States team to provide medical care.

Back in London, Yeghnazar refuses to make visa application for replacement crews until we are successful in Marivan.

Jim Furgerson, Brotherhood Com-

mission national disaster relief director, leads the second six-man team. Furgerson shares with me after arriving in Cyprus that Yeghnazar fears for our safety; he thinks we may be constricted.

Wednesday, May 15 **Today's Word: Arrival**

SANANDAJ, Iran—The journey began 13 days ago. Finally, we arrive in west central Iran after a broken hydraulic line on the C-130 costs us another day in Cyprus. As we fly south across the western mountains of Iran none of the delays and obstacles seem to matter now. We must focus on the job ahead.

It is a nervous ride. Though we fly during lunch I am unable to eat. There is too much to think about. The uncertainty of entering the country and how we will be treated consumes most of my thoughts.

Our flight is full. Besides the crew of seven, there are 10 Southern Baptist disaster team members and media, and three Norwegian Lutherans. Also on our team is Mafa Barzani, a U.S. citizen and a Moslem who lives in Dallas. A Kurd raised in Iraq, he is our interpreter.

The descent into Sanandaj is breathtaking. The rolling hillsides of west central Iran form a landscape of

Blue-gray uniformed police **file into the airport, some** **with machine guns.**

soft green grass-covered continuance of gently rounded shapes. Small villages of brown, adobe-like habitats appear throughout the mountains.

Local officials in Sanandaj apparently are not expecting us. Blue-gray uniformed police file into the airport, some with machine guns. They are slow to approach the plane, peering at the Mercy Ship Zoe as if a UFO has just landed. Considering it has been 12 years since a group of Americans has shown up in Iran their consternation is understandable. There is no panic; just extreme caution.

We gingerly step from the plane smiling from ear to ear to face a semi-circle of armed police and military. As both groups face off we suddenly hear a familiar yet surprising sound—hallelujah! A small contingency of Iranian Christians appears from behind

the plane, smiling and shouting praises. They engulf us with handshakes and hugs.

The greeting by the Iranian Christians relieves the airport officials. Caution gives way to curiosity. We go through the small airport terminal to waiting vehicles. There is no baggage inspection or stamping of passports.

After a brief delay our entourage travels to the Gihan Gardi Hotel. While most unload gear to settle in for the night, team leaders go back to town for

a meeting with a regional disaster relief official.

The regional disaster relief official demands the name, occupation and purpose of each person on the trip. To have 11 Americans drop out of the sky is a career-threatening crisis. He isn't happy.

Still, team members detect the local official's compassion for the refugees. With over \$30,000 of kitchen and water equipment now under lock and key at

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Returning Home

Following the failed Kurdish revolt against Saddam Hussein in Iraq, an estimated 2 million Kurds fled into Turkey and Iran. While 12 Southern Baptists entered Iran for mass feeding in refugee camps, Southern Baptist medical missions volunteers established clinics first in Turkey before moving into Iraq.

Eddie Pettit, Brotherhood Commission Baptist Young Men's director, and Tommy Dulin, a layman from Harlingen, Texas, entered Iraq May 11.

"Our objective was to establish two feeding sites in Iraq," Pettit says. "But the U.S. military moved the Kurds out of the mountains into refugee camps and began distributing food in bulk."

With the food supply established, Pettit and Dulin, working through the London-based Global Partners, focused on facilitating the Southern Baptist medical missions efforts in Iraq.

"There were five Southern Baptist doctors and five nurses working at Zakho with 19 other medical personnel from around the world," Pettit says.

The Zakho clinic saw over 4,000 patients during the three weeks Pettit and Dulin were in Iraq. Southern Baptist's largest contribution was medical supplies, he says.

"We had the needed medicines that other groups did not have in their clinics including gamma globulin, antibiotics and vitamins," Pettit says.

Malnutrition, burns, ulcers, scabies, typhoid and meningitis were common diagnoses.

"The main objective that Southern Baptists had was to establish a long-term presence in Iraq," Pettit says. "The impact of a clinic would not last long but to have a long-term witness we needed to be there to establish relation-

ships."

Southern Baptists, working through Global Partners, were among the first relief volunteers into Iraq, Pettit says.

"The thing that constantly impressed me was that we were working with the ones who survived, knowing that 30,000-50,000 had died in the mountains," Pettit continues. "It gave me a new sense of appreciation for life to see Kurdish doctors risking their lives for their fellow countrymen."

"It gave me a renewed sense of what love means seeing our doctors working unselfishly to help others."

Northern Iraq was secured by the U.S. military.

"I was impressed with the military," Pettit says, "rough Marines playing with and holding children. When kids died I saw Marines cry."

"I grew to appreciate the U.S. military. They were compassionate but firm."

Southern Baptist medical volunteers in Iraq included: Kerfoot and Marietta Walker, physicians, Tyler, Texas; Paul Seale, physician, San Antonio, Texas; Jay Lackey, youth minister, and Pam Lackey, nurse, Lubbock, Texas; Kaye Wilson, nurse, Clinton, Miss.; Lee Baggett, Vernon, Texas, Southern Baptist physician in Mexico; Judy Wise, Houma, La., Southern Baptist nurse in Mexico; Donna Rye, Westville, Okla., Southern Baptist nurse in Mexico; Mike Barnes, nurse, Jackson, Miss.; Bill Skinner, retired missionary physician in Paraguay now residing in Nashville, Tenn.; Shaun Shorosh, seminary student, Fort Worth, Texas; and Dale and Francis Stroupe, retired, Dallas.



Dr. Richard Hurst, second from left, of Tyler, Texas, examines the hand of an Iraqi Kurdish teen-ager. The young man stepped on a land mine when fleeing Iraq. Besides a compound leg fracture and hand injuries, Hurst discovers shrapnel in the boy's hip. With Jim Furgerson, Brotherhood Commission national disaster relief director, holding retractors, Hurst later removes the shrapnel.

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the local Red Crescent warehouse, the Iranians must perceive that we have the capacity to help.

Without any promise that the team will be allowed to stay in the country, they discuss the needs of the refugees. The Iranian official insists that we serve meat and vegetables twice a week with the rice.

Though we entered the country with diplomatic clearance, the local officials may kick us out. The number of Americans is overwhelming. We may be back on the Mercy Ship Zoe tomorrow for Cyprus.

Thursday, May 16
Today's Word: Bus

DOLENAV, Iran—We receive word

today that the local government officials will allow us to stay. It takes a morning of negotiations between representatives of the Iranian Christian Fellowship and John LaNoue, on-site coordinator, to work out the details with the Iranian

Police and soldiers are everywhere. A machine gun is never far away.

officials. After four weeks of planning more surprises are ahead.

This project has had its share of transportation problems. The plane ride takes second place in the dangerous transportation category. Today we are riding a 16-passenger Mercedes bus from Sanandaj to a refugee camp south

of Marivan.

We leave the hotel at 3:03 p.m. under the cover of dark clouds in a caravan of cargo trucks, automobiles, a lead Blazer and the bus.

The drive through town gives us our first look at an Iranian city. The city looks stark, stranded in time. There is little color, save for an occasional tree. Most buildings are mud brown.

Police and soldiers are everywhere. Not all are armed, though nearly half have pistols. A machine gun is never far away.

The passengers include our team, the Norwegians, and four Iranian Christians. We sing songs in Farsi and English. The first is "This Is the Day That The Lord Has Made." On the 14th day of this journey, we embark on the final leg of travel to our destination.

This is His day.

The countryside is breathtaking, a patchwork of plowed fields and grazing pastures. The grass forms a pattern of diamonds where sheep have worn a path walking around bushes under the careful watch of their shepherd.

A light rain that began when we were in Sanandaj washes dirt onto the two-lane highway cut out of the side of these mountains. The road is slick and narrow. Passing laws are liberal. Curves and hills mean nothing when a slower vehicle is in front of you.

Ahead we see two Mercedes dump trucks side-by-side. They are close, too close. Surely the passing vehicle will return to its lane. No. Surely the vehicle being passed will slow down. No. Surely our driver will slow down to give the passing vehicle time to get into his lane. No. I didn't come this far to die in a bus-truck collision.



With most of his family's possessions on his back, a young Iraqi Kurd walks past onlookers. Hundreds of Kurdish men and boys stand along the road across from the cooking operation. They wait in anticipation of helping.

The truck barely makes it back to its proper lane as it whisks past us just inches away. Our destination is two-and-a-half hours away. We sing, "Go Tell It On the Mountain."

The weather clears some as we continue. Before reaching Marivan, we hang a left and go south. This is not a main highway. Eventually it becomes a gravel, then dirt road. According to our maps it will dead end. From there it will be a short walk to Iraq.

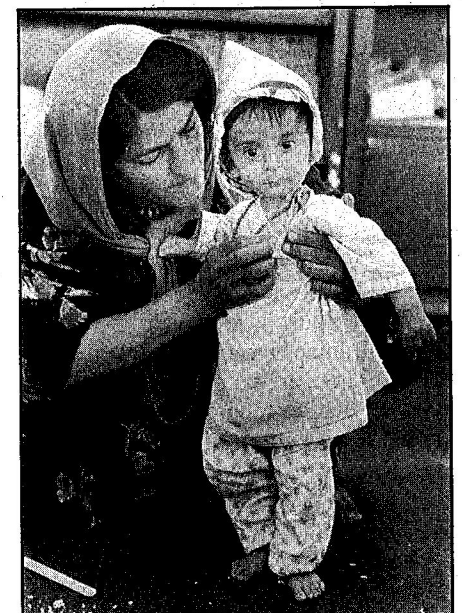
The terrain changes from rolling pastures to rough mountainous rock through which the road squeezes. Near the border are the remains of abandoned villages bombed during the Iran-Iraq War. Hundreds of destroyed homes litter the terrain.

Eventually we break through the mountain pass, our gateway to another world. From a distance the refugee camp resembles photographs from a Civil War camp with rows of tan canvas tents. At the base of a mountain that curtains us from Iraq is a temporary community of an estimated 15,000 Kurds.

We set up camp at dusk inside a secured area next to the Iranian military.

Friday, May 17
Today's Word: Wait

DOLENAV, Iran—As the sun rises



In the pediatric tent manned by the French organization Doctors Without Borders, a Kurdish mother plays with her daughter.

this morning we meet yet another delay. The refugee camp manager needs more time to "work things out." Friday is the sabbath here so stores aren't open back in Marivan. That means no propane or rice. We expected supplies to arrive Friday night. They may come tomorrow night. It will probably be Sunday.

Frustration troubles the team. We began in Dallas two weeks ago today.

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Reggie Quimby, Alabama associate Brotherhood director, shows Iraqi Kurds how to sew rice bags. Quimby, a former missionary to Spain, directs a rice cleaning operation. Volunteers return rice to bags for storage after scanning the grain for foreign objects.

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We could have fed refugees the last 10 days. We'll just have to wait.

The Iranians have stabilized this camp. There are no outbreaks of cholera here as reported by international news sources of other refugee camps. They truck in chlorinated mountain water. The Iranians distribute food, enough to sustain the Kurds.

The Kurds are fascinating people. Called the Medes in the Bible, centuries of oppression have made them tough. They are surviving in the refugee camp with some dignity, maintaining their family units as best as possible.

The Iranian refugee camp commander asks us to provide one hot meal a day. This will spare the adults from worrying about finding wood or extra food for cooking. They can spend more time getting their lives together. Long-range planning is tough when you are just trying to survive.

Sunlight lasts longer tonight; no clouds to block the day's last rays. Appropriately hanging over the mountains separating Iran and Iraq when darkness

falls is a crescent moon, the symbol of Islam. Everywhere we turn there are reminders that we are in a foreign place.

Saturday, May 18 Today's Word: Futility

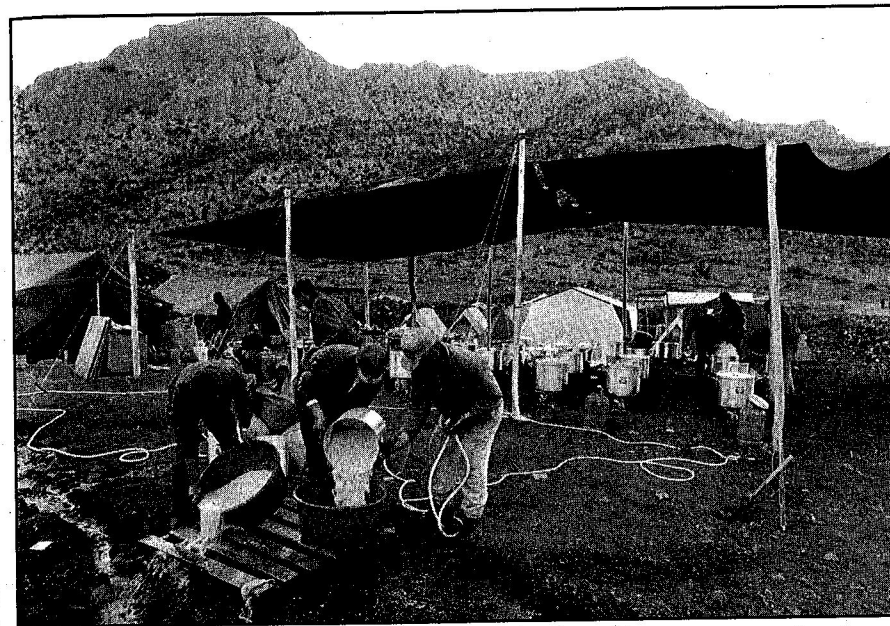
DOLENAV, Iran—Rice and propane were to arrive tonight. No deal. The rice was allegedly rotten, unfit for human consumption. Marivan's mayor rejected it.

The Iranian refugee camp commander makes us move our camp 30 yards today. We have rested on a tall soft cushion of grass. Now, we live atop the hardest dirt this side of the Euphrates. For hours today we dig rocks out of the dirt trying to create a comfortable place to lay down. It is futile. With most of the rocks gone, the ground is still very, very hard.

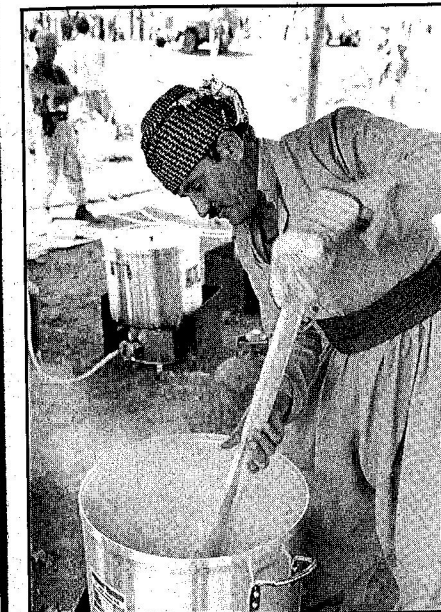
Furgerson comes to camp with an Iranian pastor. His team is still in Sanandaj. Their plane ride was horrendous. They were all air sick. The auto pilot, among other things, went out.



Despite a crippled left foot, Mohabab Ahmad Aziz shines with a smile that marvels disaster relief volunteers.



As morning dawns, Iranian Christian and Southern Baptist volunteers begin the first day of cooking. After rinsing rice with water, volunteers boil it in 20 gallon pots.



An Iraqi Kurd stirs a 20-gallon pot. Volunteers prepare a rice, raisin and bean recipe, serving 9,500 meals the first day. Within a week volunteers serve up to 13,000 meals per day. Baptist Men train Iranian Christians and Iraqi Kurds in all phases of a mass feeding operation.

They limped into Sanandaj, nearly missing the airport due to low clouds.

Because of the continuing delays there is growing concern about our safety. Furgerson's team is no longer destined for another camp. Our team's time is short. Each man made a three-week commitment. With the overlap of his team, we can train the Iranian

Christians and turn the operation over to them.

In the new camp, a water system generator powers a light that illuminates our camp for security at night. It shines directly into the "front door" of the tent I share with Reggie Quimby, Alabama Brotherhood associate director. Everyone who passes by casts a long shadow. Occasionally, the shadow has the form of a rifle stock hanging on its back.

Shortly after turning in, there is a hastily-called prayer meeting. LaNoue briefs us on what he thinks is going on. In reality, we are never sure what the Iranians are thinking or doing. There are few cultures as opposite as western Christianity and middle-eastern Islam.

Public relations specialists say that perceptions are more real than facts. Confusion imbeds our perceptions as a spirit of fear grips us.

It is apparent that the local Iranian officials are still uncertain of us and our intentions. The Iranians have expelled Irish disaster relief workers from the country, LaNoue says. He warns of paid informants listening during the day to our conversations.

I have never known fear like I feel in these few moments. It is the first time in my life that I have had to worry about surveillance during a prayer meeting. God reminds me of the disciple's fear after Christ's death, how they hid and wondered among themselves what to do. They were in hiding when Christ first appeared to them on resurrection

Sunday. Fear had immobilized them. Then, after witnessing and experiencing the resurrected Christ, they had power and courage.

"Oh, dear God. We need that now," I pray.

The anxiety causes several men to cry. We comfort and reassure each other, then begin to pray and claim a spiritual victory. As is so often the case, when we begin to pray God manifests Himself. Thirty-five propane tanks arrive. When we return to the tent after unloading the shipment there is a positive spirit of expectation. Now all we need is rice and water.

This is the most beautiful star-speckled sky I have ever witnessed. As night falls, the crescent moon dominates the night. After leaving the prayer meeting, having totally put our faith and lives in God's control,

Eventually we break through the mountain pass, our gateway to another world.

I look back up into the sky. The crescent moon is nowhere to be seen. I search the sky because moons don't just disappear on cloudless nights. As best I can determine, it has moved down behind the mountain as if hiding.

The Holy Spirit assures me and says this will be a sign that the spiritual victory will be ours as we live out the truth of Christ's gospel.

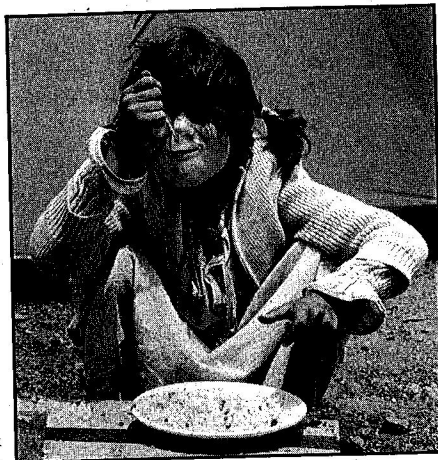
Sunday, May 19 Today's Word: Rice

DOLENAV, Iran—Finally. After 16 days of travel and delays rice arrives at the camp this evening as the Kurds cheer.

At least 12 Kurds unload the rice—they won't let us help. They feel good about helping themselves.

Furgerson's team has joined us from Sanandaj. The frustrations we felt in camp last night also occurred at the hotel. The other crew had a prayer

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The first day's serving of 9,500 meals was the first hot serving of rice for many Kurds since entering the refugee camp.

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meeting only to open the door and find an armed guard listening. Cal Jones, Louisiana Baptist Brotherhood associate director, is a former Air Force pilot. He told me he hasn't been that scared since Vietnam.

By morning the situation changed drastically. When Furgerson met in Sanandaj with the regional disaster

I have never known fear like I felt in those few moments.

relief officials, the Iranians had a new attitude. A fax from the Iranian embassy in London instructed local officials that we could have anything we needed. Our darkest hour had come just before dawn.

Monday, May 20 Today's Word: Standby

DOLENNAV, Iran—The arrival of rice and crews last night turned the corner for us on this mission. Satan had put up a good fight on Saturday, both in Dolenav and Sanandaj. The victory came on Sunday and the work begins on Monday.

With a make-shift tent built over the cooking area, 19 burners and propane

tanks are set up. The Kurds help us clean the rice, raisins and beans—the first menu items from our kitchen.

The altitude is between 6,000 and 7,000 feet. Water boils at a temperature of over 200 degrees. It takes more than an hour to make one 20 gallon pot of rice. This will slow the process, but there is no turning back.

Tents, stoves and water systems are like a three-ring circus to the Kurds. All day long they line the road in front of our camp and watch us work, even offering to help. Their presence is a gesture to us of thanks.

As on most mission trips, it's the children who rip out your heart. In every crowd a face stands out. Among the small congregation of children who constantly surveys our proceedings is a little girl with a smile that won't quit.

Her name is Mohabad Ahmad Aziz. Unlike most Kurds who wear drab-colored clothes, she wears a scarlet blue smock against her dark skin. Though we can't talk, her personality shines like a light in the dark.

How can a child in such a dreaded situation be so happy? I hope to see her tomorrow.

Tuesday, May 21 Today's Word: Rice

DOLENNAV, Iran—The first pots of rice begin cooking at 1 a.m. Distribution starts at 10:30 a.m.

The crowd in front of our camp is bigger this morning. After five days in the camp it is time to fulfill our mission. They are hungry, though not starving. Their hunger is for variety and wholesome food. There is a hunger for love and compassion. We will serve more than just pots of rice.

Sixty-seven camp representatives distribute the food. Each is responsible for 40 tents.

I look for the little girl from yesterday. Shortly after noon I see her. She is wearing bright yellow today, again the brightest color of any child in camp. Yesterday she had been kneeling with other children in a semi-circle singing Kurdish songs. Today as she stands I realize that this beautiful child has a

An Iraqi Kurdish boy washes a plastic container. Kurdish representatives take pots of rice into the camp. Volunteers clean the pots before sending them out with more rice. Each representative is responsible for 40 tents.

clubfoot. Still, she smiles and I marvel.

On the eighteenth day—the last day in camp for half of the original 12 crew members—we serve 9,500 meals.

In the late afternoon an Islamic imam visits the camp. An imam is a very powerful religious figure in an Islamic republic. To our amazement, the imam gives us his blessing. He thanks us in the name of Allah for coming all the way from America to offer humanitarian assistance to the Kurds.

Late today a bus arrives to take us back to Sanandaj. Leaving is difficult.

Iranian Christians, Kurds and even Iranian soldiers say good-bye and wish us well.

The Iranians confined us to our camp

Our darkest hour had come just before dawn.

throughout the five days. The ride out of Dolenav gives us the best overview of the camp. As darkness falls, camp fires glow across the foot of the moun-

tains that encircle their world.

Terrain, politics and diplomacy still trap them. We are free to return home. I will soon be in the comfort of my home with my wife and children. The Kurds remain.

The remaining crew fed up to 13,000 meals a day. But it wasn't without incident. During the week we heard what we thought were mortar rounds in the distance. On Friday night, three mortars landed about

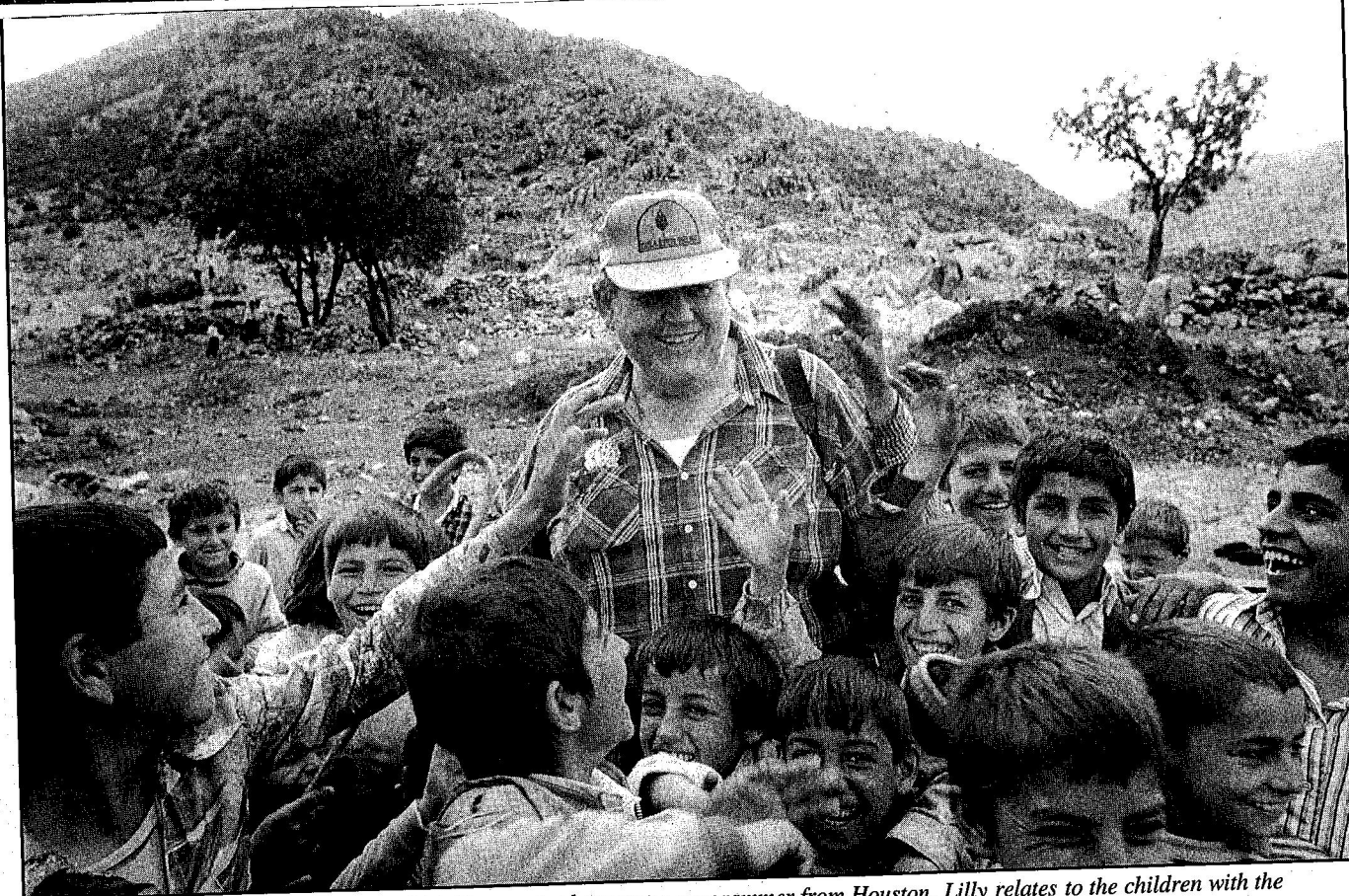
100 yards from the camp, apparently from a skirmish between Kurdish rebels and Iranian soldiers.

Yet, with all that we encountered the project must be deemed successful. On the final day in Dolenav, the imam returned to camp. He anointed the remaining team member's hands with oil and recited passages from Psalms and Proverbs. It was a final gesture of thanks.

Southern Baptists accomplished two primary objectives: establishing a

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Like a Pied Piper, children surround John Lilly, a retired computer programmer from Houston. Lilly relates to the children with the demeanor of a loving grandfather, fascinating them with his attempts to speak Kurdish.

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feeding operation and a Christian presence with people who knew little or nothing about Christianity.

The disaster response in Iran did not afford the normal ministry opportunities associated with disaster response. Language and cultural bar-

riers prevented personal evangelism. The ministry was a demonstration of Christianity as 12 Americans risked entering a country hostile to the United States to express care and love to people who most of the world knew little about.

It will take years to measure the im-

pact of those days in Dolenav. The team's demonstration of Christ's love to the Kurds was positive. What can be measured is the impact upon the lives of the Southern Baptist disaster relief workers.

The blessing was ours in Operation Desert Shower.

Twelve men assisted in Operation Desert Shower, offering humanitarian aid to Iraqi Kurd refugees in the Dolenav, Iran, refugee camp.

JIM FURGERSON
Home: Collierville, Tenn.
Occupation: Baptist Men's director and Disaster Relief coordinator, Brotherhood Commission, SBC

DENNIS QUINN
Home: St. Peters, Mo.
Occupation: Electrician

BILL ADKINS
Home: Fort Worth, Texas
Occupation: Sales

RICHARD HURST
Home: Tyler, Texas
Occupation: Pediatrician

JOHN LA NOUE
Home: Dallas
Occupation: Baptist Young Men's director, Baptist General Convention of Texas

JOHN LILLY
Home: Houston
Occupation: Retired computer programmer

LARRY BLANCHARD
Home: Lindale, Texas
Occupation: Retired electrician

JIM BURTON
Home: Memphis, Tenn.
Occupation: Editor, Baptist Men and Senior Baptist Men, Brotherhood Commission, SBC

REGGIE QUIMBY
Home: Montgomery, Ala.
Occupation: Associate Brotherhood director, Alabama Baptist Convention

WARREN HART
Home: Belton, Texas
Occupation: Associate director of missions, Bell Association, Belton, Texas

CAL JONES
Home: Alexandria, La.
Occupation: Associate Brotherhood director, Louisiana Baptist Convention

MAFA BARZANI
Home: Dallas
Occupation: Taxi driver

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Missions Needs* gives specific requests for prayer, construction and volunteer needs for home and foreign missions to be used in your monthly meeting. The columns are prepared monthly by Brotherhood staff and contributors from the Home and Foreign Mission Boards. For information about additional construction projects or how your unit can become involved contact M.B. Howard, Construction Coordinator, National Fellowship of Baptist Men, Brotherhood Commission, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, TN 38104. For information on how you can become a missions volunteer contact the Home Mission Board, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, GA 30367, or the Foreign Mission Board, P.O. Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230.

Construction

Missouri—Rockwood Mission, 137 Clarkson Rd., Ellisville 63011. Pastor: Steven Meyer (314) 227-1383. Project: Build new sanctuary. Skills needed: Carpenters, roofers, drywall, electricians, masons, finish carpenters. Start: Winter 1992. Lodging and meals limited.

Missouri—Patterson Baptist Church, Box 92, Patterson 63956. Pastor: Dave Stogsdill (314) 856-4611. Project: Build new auditorium on a slab. Skills needed: Carpenters, masons, drywall, roofers, electricians, finish carpenters. Start: Late 1991. Lodging in homes, RV parking, meals provided.

Arizona—Calvary Baptist Church, Box 1436, Lake Havasu City 86403. Coordinator: Ken Belflower (602) 264-9421. Project: Build educational building. Skills needed: Carpenters, masons, drywall, roofers, electricians, plumbers, finish carpenters. Start: ASAP. Lodging and meals limited.

Arizona—West Ajo Baptist Church, 5757 W. Ajo Way, Tucson 85746. Coordinator: Ken Belflower (602) 264-9421. Project: Build new worship center. Skills needed: Carpenters, masonry, drywall, roofers, electricians, plumbers, finish carpenters. Start: Fall 1991. Lodging and meals limited.

Prayers

Jesus Festival—Pray for the partnership between German and Georgia Baptists. Ten teams from Georgia will go in November to support the "Jesus Festival," a regional evangelistic effort in the Ruhrgebiet, the industrial section of Germany, which is said to be the most densely populated area in Europe. **New Churches**—Pray for the multiplication of 11 churches and other worship groups scattered among the 9 million people of Karachi, Pakistan. **Partnership Missions**—Pray for Baptists in Zimbabwe and Mississippi as they enter into a partnership project. Ask the Lord to use time, resources and abilities to the fullest.

The Happiness Book—The Great Joy Media Center in Singapore has

developed a new witnessing tool called "The Happiness Book." It is designed for friends and family of those who already know Christ. Ask God to give courage and boldness to believers who will use this book to present the message of salvation.

Mission Growth—Pray for physical and spiritual growth of the Hope Vietnamese Mission in Baton Rouge, La. **Indian Missions**—Pray for more Papago and Pima Indian pastors in the Casa Grande, Ariz., area.

Dominican Republic—Team of 4 needed as deaf retreat leaders for 3 days starting Dec. 26.

Argentina—10 people needed for MK program starting Dec. 28th for 9 days.

Volunteers

USA

Jefferson, Ga.—Volunteers needed for alcohol rehabilitation center. Meals and lodging provided.

Canon City, Colo.—Individual or couple needed to assist pastor with preaching, outreach, leadership training and coordinating construction groups.

Prince Albert, Canada—Interim pastor needed for new Indian work. Minimum 6-month assignment. Lodging provided in residence.

Des Moines, Iowa—Volunteers needed for telephone survey in preparation for new church start.

Paris, Ill.—Pianist and song leader needed for small mission.

Berlin, N.H.—Groups needed for revival, evangelism and special events.

Atlantic City, N.J.—Volunteers needed for literacy missions (English as a second language), clerical work and outreach. Limited housing available.

Overseas

Thailand—Specialized team of 7-10 people in evangelism needed for 2 weeks, Dec. 1-14.

Argentina—Team of 10 needed for 9 days, starting Dec. 28 for a program for missionary children.

Bolivia—Teacher/evaluator needed anytime for 2 weeks.

Yemen—Electrician for hospital medical equipment needed anytime for at least 1 month.

Argentina—Team of 12 to perform instrumental music for 10-20 days anytime.

Honduras—Water-well drilling team of 2-4 needed for 1 week in November.

Bilingual Ministry—Pray for the Church of Phillipi in San Leonard, Calif. It is trying to become bilingual and needs English-speaking people to work with second generation Korean children.